

Why our Cityhood has worked for our 24,500 Residents. I will discuss 4 main points:

Budget/property tax rate:

Palmetto Bay is getting geared up for a fight – a fight on whether or not to reduce our Village property millage rate. Property Taxes add up - the Palmetto Bay property tax is a small part of the overall tax bill. Palmetto Bay may have property tax millage rate of 2.3292, but the overall total includes more than just the municipal tax; your property tax bill also includes School Board Millages (Operating & Debt), Regional Millages (SFWMD, Evr. Proj., Okeechobee Basin & FIND) and County Wide Millages (County, Debt, Fire & Rescue, Fire Dept & Library). The overall property tax millage rate for Palmetto Bay is 18.2930.

The 2.3292 may sound higher than the UMSA rate, but within that sum, we have accomplished the following:

Police:

We have partnered with Miami-Dade County for contracted police that provide very fast response times. Our police actually respond to homes to take reports. We also created a special program, CITE, where residents can go online and report special traffic problem areas. And our policing unit does respond. Citations are issued. It's all about safety, not revenue (by the way, Palmetto Bay does NOT employ red light cameras).

Communications:

Resident's emails are responded to. Our Town Hall Meetings have been well attended and robust. We do not shy away from working to find and engage new strategies to deal with issues throughout the village. Palmetto Bay is a live and let live community, but speeders Beware: Palmetto Bay Has its Limits. Too many residents have reached their limit with drivers who speed and ignore stop signs and we are responsive to the need to maintain safety in our Village.

The announcement is clear: "When it comes to driving in The Village, a heavy foot isn't taken lightly with our Police

The Village of Parks:

Where does the 2.3292 property tax go? A significant portion goes to police (a policy decision). Another significant portion of our budget goes to parks. Palmetto Bay is truly the Village of Parks. Palmetto Bay, itself, has 104.2 acres of developed Parkland that is accessible to its residents for recreational use (not including remaining County parks such as the Deering Estate). The population at that time was 24,903. This provided that Palmetto Bay had 4.18 acres of developed parklands per 1,000 residents at the time this Parks Master Plan was completed in 2007. This far exceeds the Miami-Dade County requirements of 2.75 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The comparable (July 2007) were (LOS Standard): 2.9 for Pinecrest, 6.2 for Coral Gables, 3.7 for South Miami and 4.63 for Miami Lakes.

THE FACTS: In the Beginning, the Village of Palmetto Bay was founded with one regional park, one small neighborhood park, and a virtually unused lake park that we assumed from Miami-Dade County. I am proud to have led the original Master Plan process (completed as some of the changes were being implemented) as well as the fundraising in the form of seeking grants and appropriations for our Parks plan/efforts.

Coral Reef Park - was cleaned up and rehabilitated from its pre-incorporation state. It hosts or has hosted Family Movie nights, 2Ks, 5Ks, youth sports, beach volleyball, tennis, walking, tot lot, (to name just a few of the activities) and is home to a small (5 acre +/-) native pineland area. This park is one of the gems of Palmetto Bay.

Palmetto Bay Park, did not come to us in the size or existing amenities from Miami-Dade County as Coral Reef Park. This has been a big work in progress. We took the original Perrine Park land (5 acres), plus an expansion area, negotiated with the County for the adjacent seven acres, paying fair-market value, and expanded it... transforming it into Palmetto Bay Park, a state-of-the-art venue offering a wonderful diversity of activities and attractions for boys and girls, young and not so young, including the largest boundless playground in South Florida where children of all abilities can play together. It also offers well-lit walking paths used by joggers and walkers; and a fully renovated community room for parties, ballet and meetings.

Perrine Wayside / Dog Park. We took a former quarry and turned it from a run down, neglected "park" - in name only and turned it into something special. Listed as one of the 10 best dog parks!

Thalatta Estate and **Ludiovici** Parks have put the "Bay" back in Palmetto Bay. Thalatta Estate remains one of the most serene parks in Miami-Dade County. Ludovici Park is home to passive areas as well as an amphitheater, a community-based library and community room providing activities for our youngest to the oldest residents of the Village and home to the Palmetto Bay Garden Club.

Costs of the initial phase of the Palmetto Bay Parks Master Plan: Of interest, the total amount Palmetto Bay spent on the initial investment to make Palmetto Bay the most family friendly community in South Florida was \$16.8 million dollars, not including dollars spent on such items as landscaping, signage, plumbing, electrical, and the like. That's right - almost \$17 million dollars has been spent or budgeted on parks improvements between 2002 and the 2008-09 fiscal year. And no taxes were raised to make this happen!

That's the equivalent of more than \$350 dollars per-year, per-household, over the initial six years - a small amount, considering the large reward.

In Conclusion:

There will be fights, arguments, but it should be managed like a family squabble. Know that not everyone will agree, but these will be your decisions and you can set your level of service as low or as high as you want.

These will be your own issues, dealt with by a professional manager and a council made up of your neighbors and accountable to you.

Please don't hesitate to ask any follow up or to cover additional topics.

Very truly yours,

Eugene Flinn, proud to be mayor, Village of Palmetto Bay